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**PATENT APPLICATION**

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of

Masanori SEKINO

Group Art Unit: 2624

Application No.: 10/086,810

Examiner: Anh Hong Do

Filed: March 4, 2002

Docket No.: 112120

For: IMAGE CODING APPARATUS AND METHOD

**REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION**

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In reply to the December 29, 2004 Office Action, reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representative by Examiner Do at the interview held March 9, 2005, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below and constitute Applicant's record of the interview.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the indication that claim 8 contain allowable subject matter.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-7, 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,445,826 to Kadono. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1, 9 and 10 recite, *inter alia*, an image coding apparatus, an image coding and decoding apparatus and an image coding method, respectively, comprising a pixel